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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the investigation was to determine the differential vocational interest patterns of black college women when compared with two groups of white college women; one white group's mean age was 20, while the second group was women enrolled in college after several years of work or raising a family. The total sample of 294 university students was administered the Strong Vocational Interest Blank (SVIB) for Women. Using the significant mean score difference and percentage comparison methods of analyzing and reporting SVIB results, some consistencies for the black college women were evident. These subjects had larger mean scale scores in the Military-Manager, Business, and Non-Professional groups; scales having lower mean scale scores were characteristically in the Scientific, Art, and Verbal-linguistic groups. The author suggests that the SVIB does not appear to tap the cultural-aesthetic interests of the black college women in this sample. Tables are included. (Author/SES)

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VOCATIONAL INTERESTS OF BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN

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STUDENT LIFE CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO
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VOCATIONAL INTERESTS

OF

BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN

The inventoried interests of Black College Women is an area where we do not have a great deal of research or descriptive information. The recent recruitment and subsequent enrollment of Black college students means that more Black Womem are pursuing higher education. In this process, they are facing career choices in the form of decisions about their college major. One large question is, "How appropriate are current Interest Inventories in assisting the Black College Woman in a career choice?"

Harmon (1970), in a study including Black Women who were described as disadvantaged, found that the Strong Vocational Interest Blank for Women was a useful and appropriate instrument. Harmon's sample consisted of 25 disadvantaged Women in a new careers program and high school equivalency program. The profiles for the above group were diverse but non-professional in nature.

In a very similar study Anderson and Lawlis (1972) report that the largest percentage of primary interest patterns for "Culturally Handicapped" Women appear in the non-professional grouping of the SVIB (Group XI).

The above reports indicate that the SVIB does seem to have a degree of usefulness in identifying interest patterns of "Culturally Handicapped" or "Disadvantaged" Women. The extent of the usefulness and specific

pattern comparison is uncertain for Black College Women. The specific interest characteristics and unique patterns for Black College Women is at the present not known.

The purpose of the present investigation is to determine the differential interest patterns of Black College Women when compared with two groups of White College Women.

METHOD

Subjects

Women students from the University of Colorado - Boulder Campus were used in the sample for this study.

A brief description of the three Women's groups compared on the SVIB is given below!

BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN (N=82): This group ranged in age from 18 to 31. They had a mean age of 20. The group is composed of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors with the majority of students in the freshmen, sophomore classifications. They represent a broad spectrum of major fields of study. (G 1).

WHITE COLLEGE WOMEN (N=137): This group is comparable to the Black College Women's group in that they range in age from 18 to 25. They have a mean age of 20 and are composed primarily of freshmen and sophomores. There are some juniors and seniors in the group. A wide range of college major fields is represented in the group. (G 2)

WHITE ADULT COLLEGE WOMEN (N=75): This group represents a group of Women who have enrolled in college following several years of work, raising a family, etc.... The mean age of this group is 33, ranging in age from 19 to 48. These women come from a variety of educational backgrounds -- high school diplomas to B.A. degrees. (G 3)

Strong Vocational Interest Blanks were obtained for each of the three Women's groups described above. The members of each of the groups were administered the new SVIB for Women as part of the counseling process attempting to clarify and define vocational interests or assist in the choice of a major. Standard scores were available for each of the Basic Occupational and Non-Occupational scales for each of the above group members.

The SVIB results were analyzed for the three women's groups using analysis of variance and subsequent T-Tests. In addition, the percentages of subjects in each group having Primary (standard score 40 plus), Secondary (standard score 35-39) and Reject (standard score 0-19) scale scores were tallied and reported.

In reporting of the ANOVA results, the .01 level of significance was used while in the reporting of the percentage figures, Primary, Secondary, Reject results are given only when one of the three groups had 25 or more percent of the group members in one of the three (Primary, Secondary, Reject) categories.

RESULTS

A summary of the results of the group comparisons is presented in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Tables 6 and 7 present additional information

about correspondence between inventoried interests and declared college major (Table 6) and tabulation of Primary interest patterns (Stephenson, 1961) for Black College Women (Table 7).

Table 1 indicates the SVIB scales (Basic and Occupational) on which the Black College Women had the largest and smallest mean scale scores (.01 level) when compared with the two White Women's groups.

INSERT TABLE I HERE

The Black College Women had largest mean scores on scales in Group VII and Group XI. These groups represent the Military-Managerial (VII) and Non-Professional occupational families. By contrast, the smallest mean scale scores for the Black College Women are found in the Outdoors, Art and Music Basic Scales; the Fine Arts related fields, the Verbal Oriented occupations and the non-occupational scales of Academic Achievement and FM II.

In general, the differences between the largest and smallest mean scores for the Black College Women is in the Non-Professional, technically oriented interest areas versus the Cultural-Aesthetic and Verbally oriented occupational areas.

The results shown in Table 2 compare the mean scale scores of Black and White College Women. The scales listed are those for which the Black College Women have significantly larger, and a significantly smaller mean scale scores.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

The Black College Women have some very definite interest differences

using this method of comparison. The most noticeable differences are found in the Business (Group VIII), Non-Professional group (XI), the Scientific group (V,VI) and the Art (II) group. The Black College Women have the larger mean scale scores in the Business and Non-Professional groups - and the smaller mean scores in the Scientific and Art areas.

Comparisons of the mean scale scores for the Black College Women and White Adult College Women are shown in Table 3.

INSERT TABLE 3 HERE

Table 3 shows the larger and smaller mean scale scores for the Black College Women. Some consistencies occur in Tables 1, 2, 3. In all three the Army-Enlisted and Navy-Enlisted scales, as well as four of the Group XI scales (Non-Professional) appear as the larger mean scale score for Black College Women.

With respect to the smaller mean scale scores, the Black Women score significantly lower in all three tables on the Outdoor, Art, and Music Basic scales. On the smaller Occupational Scales, there is also a consistent pattern. The Black College Women score lower in the Scientific (V,VI), and Art (II) groups.

The results indicated in Table 4 show that Black College Women have the largest percentage of standard scores 50 and above on the Office Practices, Teaching, Social Service and Sports Basic Scales.

INSERT TABLE 4 HERE

Black College Women have the smallest percentage of standard scores

50 and above on the Physical Science, Outdoors, Biological Science, Music, Art, Performing Arts, and Writing Basic Scales. A definite difference in the largest-smallest percentages of standard scores 50 and above appears in the Science related scales, the Aesthetic-Cultural scales and the people related scales. The Black College Women seem to have basic interest which is less reflective of basic interest in the sciences - and more reflective of interests in some people related areas.

Table 5 shows the occupational scales for which Black College Women have the largest percentage of standard scores in the primary interest range (standard scores of 40 and above).

INSERT TABLE 5 HERE

Some very definite similarities again arise, using this method of interest comparison. The Army-Enlisted, Navy-Enlisted, and Group XI (Non-Professional) scales show the largest percentage of 40 plus standard scores.

Another question that merits looking into relates to the correspondence of the SVIB results (Basic Interest Scales, Primary and Secondary Interest Patterns) and the declared major field of the Black College Women. Table 6 contains a partial answer to this question.

INSERT TABLE 6 HERE

The consistency between the Basic scales and major field of study appears to be very good. Sixty-five of eighty-two (79%) Black Women had above average Basic interest scale scores which corresponded or were

consistent with the major field of study. Using the Primary and Secondary Occupational scales, 60 of 82 (73%) of the Black Women had consistent SVIB results and declared major fields.

The above results compare favorably with a comparable group of 75 White College Women who had a very definite major area of study. By comparison the White College Women group had fewer consistent Basic scales but more consistent Primary Interest scale results. The consistency for Secondary Pattern Scales was the same for both groups.

A tabulation of primary interest patterns (Stephenson, 1961) within occupational groups is noted in Table 7.

INSERT TABLE 7 HERE

Thirty of the tabulated primaries were in the Military-Managerial (VII) group; 17 were in the Non-Professional group (XI); 12 in the Verbal-Linguistics (III) and 12 in the Medical Service (X) group. The remaining primaries were in the Social Service (IV), Verbal Scientific (V) and Business (VIII) groups. Eighteen of the Black College Women had no primaries using the above method of pattern analysis.

For those students having primary patterns, 33 had a single primary pattern; 22 had two primary patterns; 6 had three and 3 Black women had four primaries. Those who had a single primary showed the greatest number in VII and IX - Military-Managerial and Non-Professional. For those students with two primaries, the pattern shifts. There is about an equal number of primaries in the III, IV, VII, X, and XI groups.

For the Black students having three and four primaries, groups X, VII, ans XI appear most frequently. Thus, there appears to be a great deal of diversity at the occupational scale level for Black College Women using a primary pattern analysis whereby a majority of B+ and A scores appear for an occupational grouping.

DISCUSSION

Using the significant mean score difference and percentage comparison methods of analyzing and reporting SVIB results, some consistencies for the Black College Women are evident.

Black College Women have the larger mean scale scores in the Military-Manager (VII), Business (VIII) and Non-Professional (XI) groups. Interests in these areas are perhaps more practical in nature and representative of persons in many of the technical and skilled fields. In addition, there seems to be an emphasis upon academic pursuits which are of shorter duration and lead to quicker, more immediate financial rewards.

The scales having the lower mean scale scores are characteristically in the Scientific (V, VI), Art (II), Verbal-Linguistic (III) groups. These four groups represent areas of fields which Black Women have perhaps had very little exposure to or experience with. They also represent some of the more theoretical - less practical fields in which advanced degrees are currently needed for suitable employment.

The lower Music and Art Basic Scales, Performing Arts and Art Occupational scale scores is reflective of cultural differences with respect to interests. I think it would be erroneous to say that this group of Black Women is culturally deprived but rather more appropriate

to say that they are culturally different. The SVIB does not appear to tap the cultural-aesthetic interests of the Black College Woman in this investigation.

In analyzing the appropriateness of or consistency between SVIB and the various scales, it is evident that the Basic scales are more appropriate for the Black College Woman. There is more correspondence between college major and Basic scale scores than for the Primary, Secondary interest patterns and the college major. This is perhaps most important in interpreting the SVIB and assisting the student in a career choice. Those Black College Women for whom the Primary and Secondary interest pattern did not seem to correspond with college major were considering the following fields of study: Psychology, Fine Arts, Medicine, Science, Journalism, English (Literature), Political Science, and the Health Related fields. The Basic scales on which there was a discrepancy were the Business majors, Journalism majors and a few Education majors.

In looking at the family groupings and Primary Interest patterns of the Black College Women, Group VI (Military-Managerial) appears most frequently. The Non-Professional (XI), Medical-Service (X) and Verbal Linguistics are the Primary patterns which occur in order of frequency.

Thus, when comparisons are made on standard scores and percentages of Primary, Secondary and Reject patterns, the results are much different than when we look at the pattern analysis and correspondence of SVIB results and college major.

In many respects, the Black College Women SVIB results look very much like those reported by Harmon. The Group XI (Non-Professional)

and Group X (Medical-Service) results remained similar as did the Group VII (Military-Managerial) patterns. The differences appear in the Verbal-Linguistics Group (III) and the Social Service Group (IV). The Black College Women had more primary patterns in these two groups than did the Women in Harrison's study. A Basic scale similarity occurs for the Outdoors scale. Both groups (Black College Women and Harrison's) scored low on this scale. Other Basic scale similarities are on the Office Practices (High scores), Writing (Low scores) and Art (Low scores).

The SVIB can be a very useful instrument with Black College Women. It does differentiate specific interests as well as display diversity. Care should be taken in interpreting certain profiles - and extensive use of the Basic scales seems in order in helping young Black College Women make career choices. Further investigation and research are perhaps warranted to get a more complete picture of Black Women in the more professional fields.

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TABLE 1

SVIB SCALES HAVING SIGNIFICANTLY
LARGER - SMALLER MEAN SCORES*
FOR BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN**

LARGER SVIB SCALE SCORES	SMALLER SVIB SCALE SCORES
Army-Enlisted	Outdoors
Navy-Enlisted	Art
Dental Assistant	Music
Telephone Operator	Musician Performer
Instrument Assembler	Art Teacher
Sewing Machine Operator	Interior Decorator
Beautician	Newswoman
	Psychologist
	Librarian
	Translator
	AACH
	FMII

* Mean score for black college women larger or smaller than both comparison groups

** .01 Level of Significance used.

TABLE 2

SVIB SCALES ON WHICH BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN
HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER - SMALLER MEAN SCORES*
WHEN COMPARED WITH WHITE COLLEGE WOMEN

LARGER SVIB SCALE SCORES	SMALLER SVIB SCALE SCORES
Office Practices	Outdoors
Model	Art
Army-Enlisted	Music
Navy-Enlisted	Musician Performer
Accountant	Art Teacher
Bank Woman	Artist
Life Ins. Underwriter	Interior Decorator
Buyer	Newswoman
Business Ed. Teacher	Psychologist
Lic. Prac. Nurse	Librarian
Dental Assistant	Translator
Executive Housekeeper	Physician
Secretary	Chemist
Saleswoman	Mathematician
Telephone Operator	Occupational Therapist
Instrument Assembler	AACH
Sewing Machine Operator	FMII
Beautician	

* .01 Level of Significance used.

TABLE 3

SVIB SCALES ON WHICH BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN
HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY LARGER - SMALLER MEAN SCORES*
WHEN COMPARED WITH WHITE ADULT COLLEGE WOMEN

LARGER SVIB SCALE SCORES	SMALLER SVIB SCALE SCORES
Army-Enlisted	Merchandising
Navy-Enlisted	Outdoors
Physical Ed. Teacher	Art
Radiologic Technologist	Music
Dental Assistant	Musician Performer
Telephone Operator	Art Teacher
Instrument Assembler	Interior Decorator
Sewing Machine Operator	Newswoman
Beautician	English Teacher
	Language Teacher
	Social Science Teacher
	Social Worker
	Psychologist
	Librarian
	Translator
	AACH
	FMII

* .01 Level of Significance used.

TABLE 4

BASIC SCALES ON WHICH BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN
HAVE LARGEST - SMALLEST PERCENTAGE OF
STANDARD SCORES 50 AND ABOVE

LARGEST PERCENTAGE BASIC SCALES	SMALLEST PERCENTAGE BASIC SCALES
Office Practices (53%)	Physical Science (27%)
Teaching (61%)	Outdoors (12%)
Social Service (62%)	Biological Science (49%)
Sports (54%)	Music (31%)
	Art (28%)
	Performing Arts (37%)
	Writing (39%)

TABLE 5

OCCUPATIONAL SCALES ON WHICH BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN HAVE LARGEST PERCENTAGE OF STANDARD SCORES IN PRIMARY (40+) CATEGORY*

SCALES	PERCENTAGE
Model	27
Army-Enlisted	37
Navy-Enlisted	45
Radiologic Technologist	35
Dental Assistant	29
Elementary Teacher	26
Secretary	50
Telephone Operator	29
Beautician	51
Airline Stewardess	34

* Only Primaries containing 25% or more of group reported.

TABLE 6

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SVIB RESULTS AND DECLARED MAJOR FOR BLACK AND WHITE COLLEGE WOMEN

SCALES

	BASIC				PRIMARY OCCUPATIONAL				SECONDARY OCCUPATIONAL			
	B*		W*		B*		W*		B*		W*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
CONSISTENT	65	79	45	60	22	27	30	40	38	46	35	47
QUESTIONABLE	04	05	18	24	19	23	19	25	14	17	07	09
INCONSISTENT	13	16	12	16	41	50	26	35	30	37	33	44

*B: Black College Women (n=82)
*W: White College Women (n=75)

TABLE 7

NUMBER OF PRIMARY PATTERNS EXHIBITED
BY BLACK COLLEGE WOMEN*

	FAMILY (group)	N**
I	Performing Arts	7
II	Art	2
III	Verbal-Linguistics	12
IV	Social Service	9
V	Verbal-Scientific	5
VI	Science	4
VII	Military-Managerial	30
VIII	Business	4
IX	Home Economics	3
X	Medical Service	12
XI	Non-Professional	17
----	No Primary	18

* Primary patterns determined using method suggested by Stephenson (1961)

** Many students exhibited more than one primary pattern: N indicates number of primary patterns for total group of 82 black college women.